

LOSS PREVENTION

Spring 2003

SPOTLIGHT

FOCUSING ON LOSS PREVENTION INFORMATION FOR STATE AGENCIES

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& Forecasting Division

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Forum Draws Large Audience

The Fall 2002 *Spotlight* profiled the Loss Prevention Review Team (LPRT) program, which began operation in the Risk Management Division in June 2002. Established by the 2002 Legislature, this program requires all agencies to report to Office of Financial Management a death, serious injury or other substantial loss that is alleged or suspected to be caused at least in part by the actions of the state agency. A review by an appointed team will be conducted for incidents that the Director determines to "merit review."

Soon after these requirements were in place, a significant, and very tragic event occurred—the death of a Spokane Department of Licensing (DOL) field auditor. As LPRT program manager Roselyn Marcus coordinated with DOL on this reported incident, she became aware of their extensive investigation into the circumstances of this death. She also observed DOL's immediate and comprehensive process to identify and implement loss prevention strategies to prevent future occurrences.

Roselyn Marcus concluded that the "lessons learned" loss prevention strategies that grew out of DOL's dedication and concern were appropriate to other agency field employees in similar settings and situations. As a result, she developed the "Safety Management Practices for Field Operations and Employees Forum". The day-long event was held March 6, 2003, at the General Administration building in Olympia with attendance by 135 employees, represented by 30 agencies from around the state. OFM Director, Marty Brown, welcomed the participants and provided opening remarks. Attorney General Christine Gregoire made the keynote presentation.

COMMERCIAL
INSURANCE
UPDATE*Foreign Liability Insurance
Coverage "Translated"*

The Risk Management Division frequently receives questions from agencies and colleges about foreign liability coverage, such as what is it, who does it cover, how do we apply for it, and how should the agency respond should a loss occur in a foreign country?

Policy Coverage

The state purchases commercial foreign liability insurance because the state Self-Insurance Liability Program does NOT cover losses that occur in foreign countries. The foreign liability policy provides general and automobile liability for state employees, volunteers and students who are traveling outside the United States on state business. It provides worldwide coverage, excluding the United States, its territories or possessions, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

The foreign liability policy covers bodily injury and property damage losses caused by state employees, volunteers and students who are traveling outside of the United States. It does not provide any medical or death benefits for state employees, volunteers, or students.

Obtaining Coverage

Contact Claudia Schmitz at (360) 902-7306 to obtain foreign liability coverage. The following information is required: (1) *destination*, (2) *number of people traveling*, (3) *length of stay*, and (4) *purpose*.

Reporting Loss

Immediately report loss details to the Risk Management Division at (360) 902-7303.

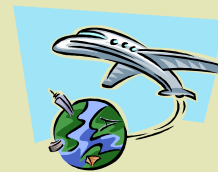
Field Employees Safety Forum Debuts On Video and CD!

If you were unable to attend Risk Management Division's *Safety Management Practices for Field Operations and Employees Forum* held March 6, 2003, in Olympia—don't despair! The entire day's events were captured on video by the Department of Information Services.

To borrow a free CD or videocassette, which includes *all* the Forum's presentations (accompanied by a copy of the handout packet for copying), visit the Loss Prevention Review Team Program website. Details are provided for borrowing a video tape or CD on-line at: <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/rmd/lprt/loss.htm>. Click on "Forum-Video/CD".

FAST
FACTS:

A total of **20,914** claims were filed with the Risk Management Division during the five plus-year period of FY 98 (July 1, 1997) through April 10, 2003. Within that total, 2,030 or 10% were auto liability claims and the remaining 18,884 or 90% were general liability.





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RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

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Forum (cont.)

The focus of the Forum centered on two panels whose participants shared an "up-close and personal" message of their agency's approach to mitigating personal risk for employees working in field assignments.

The first panel consisted of DOL staff members *Nancy Kelly*, Assistant Director for Vehicle Services; *Denise Hoage*, Investigator, Business & Professions Division; *Paul Johnson*, Audit Compliance Manager, Probate & Fuel Tax Division; *Dick Gray*, Audit Compliance Office Supervisor-Spokane; and *Greg Gurske*, Employee Development & Training Manager.

They shared their story of events connected with the tragic loss of a valued employee and fielded a myriad of questions from agencies about their response.

The afternoon panel brought together a variety of agencies that also shared their strategies for increasing the safety of their field-based employees.

This panel consisted of *Sandy Davis*, Safety Officer-Department of Revenue; *Cindy Blue*, PM2/JRA Region 6-DSHS; *Joe Sacks*, Deputy Director for Field Services-L&I; *Leonard Junk*, Law Enforcement Training Supervisor, and *Lisa Sailsa*, Special Agent, both from the Gambling Commission.



Loss Prevention Projects Drive Home Vehicle Safety Message

Two major initiatives drive the Risk Management Division's 2003 focus on reducing vehicle accidents:

- ◆ *Safe Driving Video* - Development of a quality 15-minute orientation-based video for state employee drivers targeted at promoting safe driving practices. With development assistance from a focus group of agency and college representatives, the video will be produced by the Department of Information Services' Interactive Technologies. When complete, the video will be linked to state government web sites for downloading by agencies, universities, and colleges (and will also be also available on CD Rom and video cassette).
- ◆ *Core Vehicle Accident Prevention Program* - Development of accident prevention strategies to reduce state vehicle losses. At its April 9, 2003 meeting, the Loss Prevention Sub-Committee discussed potential loss prevention strategies for reducing vehicle losses. These strategies will be developed and reviewed at the next meeting. These recommendations will be presented to the Risk Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) chaired by OFM Director, Marty Brown. Final recommendations adopted by RMAC will be added to the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM).

Personal Conduct to Minimize Violence

(From Forum Information Packet)

The following are "do's" for daily interactions with people to de-escalate situations that may cause hostile clients. Often the field employee, by his or her own actions, mannerisms and words can do much to create and maintain a calmer and safer interaction with clients:

- ✓ Project calmness, move and speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- ✓ Be an empathetic listener: Encourage the person to talk and listen patiently.
- ✓ Focus your attention on the other person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- ✓ Maintain a relaxed yet attentive posture and position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person.
- ✓ Acknowledge the person's feeling. Indicate that you see he/she is upset.
- ✓ Ask for small, specific favors such as asking the person to move to a quieter area.
- ✓ Establish ground rules if unreasonable behavior persists. Calmly describe the consequences of any violent behavior. Use delaying tactics, which will give the person time to calm down. For example, offer a drink of water (in a disposable cup).
- ✓ Be reassuring and point out choices. Break big problems into smaller more manageable problems.

Vehicle Claims Recoding Project in High Gear

Claims administrator Mike Kirkpatrick announced that Risk Management's shuffle of the database's 28,000+ vehicle claims to a new and improved coding scheme is close to completion.

Once the coding migration is finished, agencies will reap the rewards. More concise loss information will help agencies identify loss prevention strategies for reducing vehicle accidents and claims.

For instance, the new coding scheme provides differentiation between auto accident categories where the *state agency caused the alleged loss* to someone else and those where *someone else caused the loss* to the state agency.

Coding migration has been completed. The next phase of the project begins when RMD's programmer, Tuan Hoang, completes development of a vehicle loss report package.

This package of reports will feature vehicle data in a variety of formats designed to help agencies pinpoint loss trends, identify costs, and track progress on vehicle accident reduction objectives. Completion is targeted for end of June 2003. Watch this newsletter for announcements on availability of the new vehicle loss history reports.